

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-23 (canceled)

24. (currently amended) A ~~high-molecular~~ water-soluble flocculant comprising a combination of:

a polymeric material having an average molecular weight of at least 5000, said polymeric material comprising at least one cyano group wherein said at least one cyano group comprises at least 15 mol% of the total monomer units present in said polymeric material; and in which at least a portion of cyano groups contained in a high-molecular material has been converted into carbamoyl groups

a hydrolysis catalyst.

25. (currently amended) The ~~high-molecular~~ flocculant ~~as claimed in~~ according to claim 24 wherein a further portion of the carbamoyl groups is converted into carboxyl groups or salts thereof said polymeric material and said hydrolysis catalyst combine to convert at least a portion of said at least one cyano group to a carbamoyl group.

26. (currently amended) The ~~high-molecular~~ flocculant ~~as claimed in~~ according to claim 24 wherein said high-molecular polymeric material contains further comprises acrylonitrile as a monomer unit.

27. (currently amended) The ~~high-molecular~~ flocculant ~~as claimed in~~ according ~~to claim 26~~ 24 wherein said ~~high-molecular~~ polymeric material is ~~at least one~~ selected from the group consisting of acrylic fibers, nitrite resins, styrene-acrylonitrile resins, acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene resins, acrylonitrile-styrene-acrylic resins, acrylonitrile-chlorinated polyethylene-styrene resins, nitrite rubbers, and acrylonitrile-butadiene rubbers.

Claim 28 (canceled)

29. (currently amended) The ~~high-molecular~~ flocculant ~~as claimed in~~ according ~~to claim 24~~ wherein said ~~high-molecular~~ polymeric material is contained in a waste material ~~used up for other purposes~~.

Claims 30-39 (canceled)